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DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

NATIONAL MILITARY COMMAND CENTER

MESSAGE CENTER

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DE RUESUA 028 2501727
ZNY CCCCC
P 071530Z SEP 69
FM USDAO RIO DE JANEIRO
TO RUCRJCS/DIA
INFO RUEHC/DEPT OF STATE
RUESVB/USCINCSO (J-2)
RULPAK/USARSO (G-2)
RUEAOWD/OACSI DA
RUECSDE/USMILGP BRAZIL
RUESUZ/AMEMBASSY BRASILIA
RUESUP/AMCONSUL SAO PAULO
RUESEI/AMCON RECIFE
ZEN/AMCONSUL PORTO ALEGRE
BT

905 19 102

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~ 905 FM ARMA SEP 69

1. (C) AT APPROXIMATELY 2220, LAST NIGHT, ARMY MINISTER LYRA (TAVARES) TELEPHONED ME AND ENGAGED IN A RATHER UNUSUAL CONVERSATION, THE ESSENCE OF WHICH WAS: "WE HAVE NOT HAD RECENT DIRECT CONTACT AND I THINK THIS IS APPROPRIATE UNDER CURRENT CIRCUMSTANCES. I ASKED MURICY (ARMY CHIEF OF STAFF) TO REASSURE YOU AND BELTON (DCM) THIS MORNING THAT GOVERNMENT IS FIRM IN ITS POSITION ON COOPERATING TO SECURE THE RELEASE OF THE AMBASSADOR. THERE IS SOME UNHAPPINESS AND I KNOW YOU ARE AWARE OF THIS, BUT I WANTED TO TELL YOU MYSELF THAT THE GOVERNMENT IS SUCCEEDING IN ITS EFFORTS."
2. (C) ABOUT TEN MINUTES LATER, A WELL-INFORMED GENERAL OFFICER SOURCE CALLED TO SAY THAT PARATROOPERS HAD JUST READ A MANIFESTO OVER RADIO NACIONAL AND THE AIRBORNE BRIGADE AT THE VILA MILITAR WAS IN A STATE OF REBELLION. THE MANIFESTO VOICED OPPOSITION TO THE GOVERNMENT'S ACTION IN EXCHANGING PRISONERS FOR AMBASSADOR ELBRICK AND ASSERTED THAT COUNTER-INSURGENCY WOULD NOW BE INITIATED. THE STATEMENT WAS OF SHORT DURATION AND CAME IN THE MIDST OF THE PLAY-BY-PLAY DESCRIPTION OF A SOCCER GAME. THE GAME BROADCAST WAS QUICKLY RESUMED.
3. (C) IMMEDIATE CONTACT WITH OTHER SOURCES REVEALED THAT GREAT ANXIETY EXISTED AT THE AIRBORNE BRIGADE AND THAT A HANDFUL OF PARATROOPERS HAD GONE TO GALEAO

ACT: DIA-20

INFO: NMCC-1 AMPS/FILE-1(22)/GHH/MY

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Authority NW 43245
By MP/AMW, NARA, Date 29 May 2015

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AIRPORT EARLIER IN THE AFTERNOON IN AN ATTEMPT TO BLOCK THE DEPARTURE OF THE C-130 CARRYING THE PRISONERS. THE AIRCRAFT HAD ALREADY LEFT AND AN OFFICER AT THE BASE TRIED TO EXPLAIN THE GOVERNMENT'S POSITION TO THE EXCITED YOUNG MEN. APPARENTLY THE SMALL GROUP THEN HEADED FOR THE RADIO NACIONAL TRANSMITTER WHERE IT SUCCEEDED IN GETTING ON LINE UNDER THE CIRCUMSTANCES DESCRIBED ABOVE.

4. (C) ONE SOURCE QUOTED ARMY CHIEF OF STAFF MURICY AS SAYING THAT "THE 4 OR 5 WHO WENT TO GALEAO AND THE RADIO STATION WERE CONNECTED WITH SOME 30 TO 35 AT THE BRIGADE. THESE TRIED TO FOLLOW UP ON THE MANIFESTO WITH AN ATTEMPT TO TALK THE WHOLE BRIGADE INTO REBELLION. THEY ALSO TRIED TO OBTAIN THE SUPPORT OF THE SCHOOL INFANTRY REGIMENT. GEN. ADAUTO (THE BRIGADE COMMANDER) STOOD FIRM WITH HIS STAFF AND THE SCHOOL INFANTRY REGIMENT ALSO REMAINED LOYAL. ABOUT A DOZEN YOUNG OFFICERS OF THE BRIGADE ARE UNDER ARREST."

5. (C) GEN. CASTILHO, COMMANDER OF THE 1ST DIVISION AND VILA MILITAR GARRISON WENT OUT TO HIS HEADQUARTERS AS SOON AS NOTIFIED AND REPORTEDLY ASSERTED A VOICE OF DECISIVE LEADERSHIP ON BEHALF OF DISCIPLINE AND FIDELITY TO THE MINISTER'S AUTHORITY. COMPETENT SOURCES BELIEVE THAT 1ST ARMY COMMANDER GEN. SYSENO ALSO REMAINED STEADFAST IN HIS LOYALTY.

6. (C) ONE OF INFORMANTS CONTACTED INDIRECTLY AT ABOUT MIDNIGHT WAS AT QUARTERS OF MAJ. GEN. AFFONSO DE ALBUQUERQUE LIMA. SOURCE SAID THAT LARGE GROUP WAS PRESENT AND THAT THE VILA MILITAR ACTIVITIES WERE BEING CLOSELY MONITORED. INTERMEDIARY TO THIS SOURCE, A CIVILIAN WITH FORMER CABINET RANK AND CURRENT EASY ACCESS TO KEY MILITARY FIGURES, SAID THAT GEN. AFFONSO AND ASSOCIATES WERE MAINTAINING A "CONSPIRATORIAL VIGIL" IN THE HOPE THAT UPRISING WOULD TAKE HOLD AND "AFFONSO WOULD BE CALLED TO ASSUME POWER."

COMMENT: (C) THE ACTIONS BY THE AIRBORNE HOTHEADS ARE INDICATIVE OF THE DEEPLY UNSETTLING IMPACT OF THE PRESIDENT'S ILLNESS, THE ASSUMPTION OF POWER BY THE JUNTA, THE AMBASSADOR'S KIDNAPPING, AND THE ALLEGED CAPITULATION TO TERRORIST DEMANDS. THE ATTEMPTED REBELLION IS A SERIOUS CHALLENGE TO ARMY UNITY AND TO THE PRESTIGE OF THE ARMY MINISTER. IT ALSO REFLECTS THE EXTENT TO WHICH ACTIVE DUTY

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PERSONNEL HAVE BEEN POLITICALLY EXCITED BY AMBITIOUS
INDIVIDUALS IN AND OUT OF UNIFORM. THE INCIDENT
ALMOST CERTAINLY HAS DONE MORE HARM THAN GOOD TO
LYRA TAVARES AND I INTERPRET HIS CALL TO ME AS A
SIGN OF WEAKNESS. THERE IS THE SLIGHTEST CHANCE
THAT HE MIGHT GAIN A MEASURE OF STRENGTH FROM THE
AFFAIR IF IT SERVES AS A CATALYST TO PROMOTE A RE-
DEDICATION OF THE ARMY IN TERMS OF UNITY AND
RESPECT FOR HIERARCHY, GP-3.

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